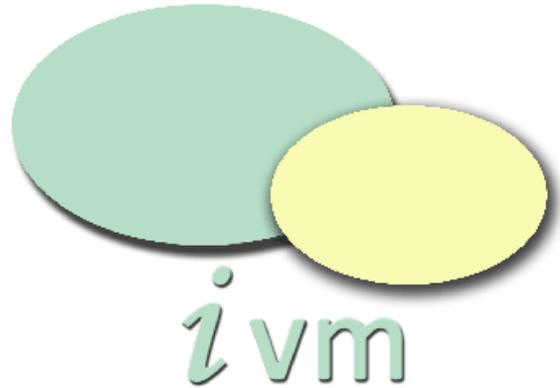


## Horsetail Guidelines



**Name:** Horsetail

**Latin name:** *Equisetum arvense*.



**Occurrence:** *Equisetum* is a genus of vascular plants that reproduce by spores rather than seeds. The genus includes 15 species commonly known as horsetails and scouring rushes. It is the only living genus in class Equisetopsida, formerly of the division Equisetophyta (Arthrophyta in older works), though recent molecular analyses place the genus within the ferns (Pteridophyta).

Many plants in this genus prefer wet sandy soils, though some are aquatic and others adapted to wet clay soils. One horsetail, *E. arvense*, can be a nuisance weed because it readily regrows after being pulled out. The stalks arise from rhizomes that are deep

underground and almost impossible to dig out. It is also unaffected by many herbicides designed to kill seed plants. The foliage of some species is poisonous to grazing animals if eaten in large quantities. *Equisetum* is cooked and eaten in Japan.

### **Facts and figures:**

In these plants the leaves are greatly reduced and usually non-photosynthetic. They contain a single, non-branching vascular trace, which is the defining feature of microphylls. However, it has recently been recognised that these microphylls probably evolved by the reduction of a megaphyll; therefore they are commonly referred to as megaphylls to reflect this homology.

They grow in whorls fused into nodal sheaths. The stems are green and photosynthetic, also distinctive in being hollow, jointed, and ridged (with (3-) 6-40 ridges). There may or may not be whorls of branches at the nodes; when present, these branches are identical to the main stem except smaller

**Persistence and Spread:** Via spores.

### **Management:**

Chemical control can be achieved by applying herbicides throughout the growing season, stems may require crushing to improve herbicidal acceptance prior to treatment, this can be carried out by a roller.

95% control should be achieved with the first season, with visits needing to continue into second and maybe third season to ensure complete eradication.